1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

464 and be willing to forego his usual demands, temporarily. During the caravan season, some will hire on as mule-drivers for a round trip. Otherwise the day laborer is rare among rural Amhara, and met more often only in provincial capitals and the few cities.

D. Labor and the market-town.

464 Laborers hiring on in the towns for temporary work (e.g. in construction) do so usually through a labor broker. There are no organized factories in the provincial towns, only a few small ones in the main cities, and [467] there is not yet such a modern development as a labor union. Child and female labor is widespread and almost entirely [465] unskilled. A laborer's daily wage was equated with 25¢ Ethiopian, by clause 6 of the Penal Code of 1930, but the present rate actively paid for urban labor of Amhara is Eth$1.-per day. The Emperor's factory proclamation of 1944 authorized the Ministry of Commerce to regulate hours and conditions of labor, but this actually anticipates future conditions and finds little application at present.

357 466 The household servant in the town usually hires out on a monthly basis. The traditional, personal guarantor and 2 witnesses of wage agreement are still necessary. The salary may now be as high as Eth$40.-. The servant is also fed and housed, and if he stays some months may keep any clothing given him. Moreover, his

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

357 466 his task is fixed in advance and if an Amhara he will usually refuse to carry out any work for which he was not engaged. Women servants usually receive half the salary of a male servant. Thus only officials and relatively high-income urbanites can afford Amhara servants; servants of socially lower groups can be hired for considerably less, if themaster is willing to forego the prestige of having Amhara servants.

The urban householder, who is not surrounded by kinfolk in his residence, usually must hire a night watchman, "zebanya", who sleeps huddled in coarse shammas in front of the house or behind the outer gate. They receive the wage of day laborers. Often they are old veterans of former feudal soldiery, too decrepit for any other work, yet still fierce-looking and fierce-tongued enough to discourage thieves.

265 466 Urban teahouses, coffeehouses and mead-houses employ waiters, "asalafi", who do not have the specialization of the more prestigeful "agafari", but who have steadier jobs. Their pay is not above that of the day laborer, but they can accumulate cash more readily.

[463] 875 871 During the present generation a new element of modern-educated clerks, teachers, hospital "dressers" and government officials is gradually entering the occupational pattern of the town, though still in very small percentages. A graduate of the traditional church school of the rural areas is considered to have only the equivalent of 2 grades of elementary school. All towns now have at least one modern elementary school with 8

563 "Barya" people below the northwest escarpment, so that
567 both terms became synonymous with "slave". Because of the negroid features of the former, and the very black skin of both, they had high visibility, and did not have to be guarded closely as they could hardly escape. In view of the widespread illiteracy, manumission was almost never practiced, and such a document would be ignored by a slave trader or any Amhara who wanted to re-enslave a manumitted Shanqalla or Barya. Until slave-trading was prohibited by the present emperor, negroid slaves were still brought from the Gumuz tribe of Guara sub-province, just below the western, old-
[588] Amhara escarpment. But concubinage was so widespread that today there are more half-Shanqalla than full-blooded ex-slaves. Freed only since 1942, little change has so far taken place in their social status. In rural areas most remain with their old masters as
[464] servants or sharecroppers. In towns, they form a pool of unskilled labor, employed only briefly from time to time, subsisting on very little, residing in the oldest parts of the old Muslim ghetto. Some of their women have
● [357] managed to raise their economic status by becoming house-maids, especially serving the women on the "street of unattached girls", or by marrying polygynous Muslims.

563 The Coptic church had not interested itself in
567 the status of slaves, for according to its rules a
797 Christian could not be kept in slavery, and therefore no attempt was made to convert Shanqalla or Barya slaves.

5: Bruce T-5 (1768-1773) 1804
MP5 Amhara MP5

four cuba for a pataka, each cuba about two rotol, or somewhat less. Butter, 20 rotol, for 1½ pataka, and 3½ harf. Civet, 1½ pataka the wakea. Wax, 4 patt. the faranzola. Elephants teeth, 35 rotol for 18 patt. Water, 1½ paras the smallest jar, and 3 paras the largest. Abyssinian gold dust, 15 patt. per wakea, at Mocha. Dora, 12 measures for a pataka. The Venetian sequin goes for 2¼ patakas.

The Abyssinian grain measure is the ardeb, which, at Gondar, contains 10 measures, called Madega, each equal to 12 ounces, Cairo weight. An ardeb of grain costs 2 derims, or 2 patakas; an ardeb of teff, the same; 6 or 8 ardeb of tocusso pay an ounce (wakea) of gold, or 10 derims.

Servants Wages at Gondar *. At Gondar a maid-servant receives 15 salts per annum, and is fed in the house. A man-servant is paid 4 pataka yearly, which correspond to four wakea, or ounces of gold, Abyssinian weight, and receives besides two loaves, or cakes of teff, for his support daily. If his master is good, he sometimes gives him a little flesh, lentils, or vetches. He is not obliged to clothe him, but he sometimes gives him a pair of trowsers, which consist of about one-fourth of a yard of white cloth.

With respect to carriage, &c. three bundles of wood, which are brought from Tchagassa, three hours walking, cost a salt. The carriage of a jar, or manteca, full of wine, or honey, from Emfras, eight hours journey, pays a salt, of the weight of 3 faranzala, or so.

Thirty-three teff bread cost a salt; the loaves are about 3 lines thick, and 18 inches diameter. A pair of shoes (pantufle) cost a salt. 8¼ peeks of cloth is the least gift that can be offered in the country.

Bouza. Manner in which the Abyssinians make a kind of beer, that, in their language, is called bouza.

To make this, they use tocusso simply; but sometimes they mix it with grain (wheat), or dora, or all three together; but in ordinary tocusso is best. A jar of tocusso, or of the three sorts of grain, contains as much as is sufficient to make two loaves, that are a tenth part of the whole jar; besides which, they use about half a rotol of Ghesh leaves.

* From this, to the 29th line of page 68, is a translation from the Italian of L. Balugani.

8: Rey G-5 (1910-1920)1935
MP5 Amhara MP5

583 586 and divorced in this manner two or three times she is considered rather a "catch", on account perhaps of her worldly possessions which she has acquired from her previous matrimonial ventures. Then if she does not retire from the world and become a kind of nun she often indulges in the third form of marriage, a solemn religious ceremony which is really binding; it is as a general rule confined to the better class of Abyssinians.

562 Women, some of whom are attractive and even pretty, have, speaking generally, little or no position. There are of course exceptions to this rule, and I have known cases where a wife has by her influence over her husband acquired a certain status for herself. But this is rare, and by a general though not universal rule women are even supposed to eat separately.

562 586 Nevertheless the higher-class woman manages to hold her own, and if badly treated by her husband has the right of appeal to the Church. And so far as I can gather the woman of any class can divorce her husband as easily as he can divorce her, which gives her a certain protection in itself.

562 462 357 In spite of the facility of divorce—possibly to some extent because of the mutual power to exercise it—the lot of women is not at all what one might expect; they are by no means the hewers of wood and drawers of water that one finds so extensively in Africa. They do little or no work, neither washing nor mending their husbands' clothes nor cooking; all this is done by Gourages or others of whom one or more is to be found in almost every household—other than the very poorest—and even amongst one's own servants, acting as "gentlemen's gentlemen".

562 Women of the upper classes are still to some ex-

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

At around ten years the Amhara girl leaves the shepherd's work once and for all and spends all her time about the house. She becomes increasingly useful with kitchen work—chopping onions, grinding pepper, baking *injarā*. Bit by bit she learns all the arts of the housewife, including how to make good *doro wat*, a hot chicken stew, the dish that really proves the mettle of an Amhara bride. By the age of twelve or thirteen she knows enough to manage a home by herself and is ripe for marriage, though her training is often capped by a period after marriage during which she works alongside her mother-in-law in the home of her husband's parents. Thus the Amhara social system sees to it that the adolescent girl, as well as the adolescent boy, is familiar with adult work responsibilities and prepared to shoulder them without much ado.

Toward Marital Roles

The transition to adult status in Amhara culture is related above all to the assumption of marital roles. The three events which more than anything else establish one as an adult are marriage, moving into one's own house, and begetting a child.

Preparation for the roles of spouse and parent is more or less continuous throughout childhood, so that nearly all Amhara enter marriage as a matter of course and at an early age. Strong identifications are formed through virtually constant association with the parent of the same sex during adolescence, and to a large extent throughout childhood. When they are not out tending the herds, girls are working around the house in the company of their mothers, and boys are off in the fields or going on trips with their fathers. This identification is strengthened by experimental play within children's groups as well. It has been observed that tiny boys and girls play "marriage" and "house" with considerable sophistication, even to the point of pretending to send a messenger to the bride's parents to announce that she had been proven a virgin.[5]

With regard to premarital preparation for adult sexual functions, however, a double standard does exist. Although public norms require boys to be virgin at marriage, and one hears it said that "in the old days" this norm was strictly enforced, premarital sexual experimentation for boys is regarded as a natural occurrence.* In practice, and according to the norms of the male adolescents themselves, boys are expected to have sexual experience before marriage so long as it is carried out quietly and with discretion. If a boy is still virgin by the end of his teens he may be referred to by one of his

* Indeed, one of the normal functions of maidservants in the well-to-do families has been to provide sexual initiation for adolescent boys.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

The instruction of girls in noble families was not so different from that of peasant girls, though they were spared some of the menial drudgery. The *çhawā* girl would be taught all the household arts, but it was understood that she would be provided with numerous slaves to do the work after marriage. Her own adult chores would be limited to the preparation of *ṭaj*, the beverage of the nobility, and special dishes for her husband; while the preparation of *ṭallā* and food for guests would be the work of domestics.

The style of life of the nobility is colored above all by a seemingly unlimited command of deference. They are addressed as "my lord" by all comers, and waited on in a hundred ways wherever they go. Every "big man" is attended by a flock of servants and retainers, who accompany him on trips and spare him the slightest exertion. This is so elemental a feature of Amhara culture that big men are commonly referred to with the associative prefix *enna-*; for example, *enna-Dajāzmātch Hailu*, meaning "Dajāzmātch Hailu and his men."

The social space of a nobleman is crowded with the issuing of commands. When he visits the home of another, he orders the servants and young people there just as imperiously as if he were in his own home. The wives of the nobility develop much the same manner, though from a more passive position. They spend a good deal of their time sitting on their beds and issuing orders. This sort of indolent, vegetative existence has produced the obese figure and morose countenance for which some Abyssinian ladies have been noted. On the other hand, from her particular vantage point the noble lady has often played an influential and enlightened part in court and regional politics.

Conspicuous consumption among the *maḳuānnent* thus takes the form of a surfeit of servants. The household of a nobleman of modest rank might boast, in addition to numerous maidservants who procure and prepare food and drink for the establishment, as many as ten to fifteen male servants. Plowden has left us a description of some of their functions:

> One carries your shield, and whenever you go out he saddles your mule and accompanies you, and in the house he makes himself generally useful about your person; another makes your mead, arranges it, and is also perhaps a gunner, and supplies you with game; another is doorkeeper and order-keeper generally. One or two, older and wiser, are counsellors, and their knowledge of the country, and of customs and tricks, is of the greatest service; another has charge of the corn, watching that the maidservants do not steal, and arranging the allowance of all the rest; others are grass-cutters only, according to the number of your beasts; another is a wood-cutter for firewood, very necessary in a country where they have no coal, and the wilderness is free to all.[21]

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

The households are staffed with numerous servants and retainers, who make certain, for example, that the lord does not work in the garden or carry a package into the house from his car. Expectations of this sort of attendance are carried with the new nobility wherever they go. Similarly, members of the new nobility are frequently followed about, or waited for, by young relatives and other aspiring young men, who hope to establish a sort of civil master-retainer relationship and thereby secure a position, promotion, or loan.

The new nobility also attempts to instill in its children the refined manners and reserve of the old noble subculture. Some of the wealthiest have retained the tradition of private education, in its modern counterpart of sending their children abroad for secondary school or to private schools in Addis Ababa. They would like to control their children in the old fashion, but because of growing cultural confusion have in many cases assumed a more permissive stance. Thus their children increasingly run about freely, ignore traditions, and exhibit less fastidious manners.

Owing to their small numbers and the fact that they meet one another so often—at the palace and at social events like weddings—the members of the new nobility tend to be well acquainted with each other. They seem conscious of their status as a privileged stratum but do not form a solidary group. They divide into strongly competitive cliques, a division that itself tends to dissolve into the anxious struggle of each to maintain or improve his position at the expense of the others. The chief way to accomplish this has been to report something incriminating about another person—above all, something that impugns his loyalty to the Emperor. The consciousness of the new nobility has been dominated by the fear of arousing the Emperor's displeasure. The proximity of the throne—a phone call can summon anyone to report to the palace within ten minutes, reason unspecified—makes this a more formidable sanction than in previous generations.

How has Haile Selassie been able to prevent the new nobility from acquiring that relative autonomy of status and self-esteem which the old nobility formerly enjoyed? Why is it, despite the burgeoning of a new "power elite," that the question most earnestly asked by thoughtful Ethiopians and foreign observers for the past several years concerns a probable future "power vacuum"?

Sensitive to encroachment on his "absolute" authority by anyone else, Haile Selassie has kept his officials in a state of weakness through the strategy of his appointments. In this he has been inspired by the traditional methods of Abyssinian rulers who periodically assigned offices to different men through the process of *shum-shīr*. Haile Selassie's policy has been to rotate officials in office every one or two years, in some cases after six months. This has prevented officials from acquiring a significant following in any one position. At the same time it has made certain that none of them will undertake any

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

cultivate a missionary spirit in order to reach the non-Christian peoples of Ethiopia. The association sponsors weekly religious services, featuring hymns in Amharic and talks in Amharic on religious and moral questions, and publishes a monthly journal. The Orthodox Students Association stands out as the first nationwide voluntary association in Ethiopia. It holds an annual convention which draws some three hundred students from all parts of the country.

The Ethiopian College Students Association was established in 1960 after some years of patient maneuvering by officers of the various college student governments. It attempts to represent the interests and needs of students vis-à-vis the government and to handle relations with international student organizations.

A number of student clubs have appeared from time to time within the framework of the colleges. One of the most popular and productive of these has been the Ethnological Society of the University College, founded in the early fifties by a Polish member of the college staff. Over the years it has produced several issues of an ethnological bulletin. More recently, under the framework of the new university, dramatic and choral groups have been established as well as groups like the Education Students Association and the Economics Students Association. Graduates of some of the secondary schools and colleges, moreover, have formed a small number of alumni associations.

Labor Unions.—Although Ethiopia has for some time been a paying member of the ILO, the government has until recently strongly opposed the establishment of unions in the country. Nevertheless, due to the encouragement of labor representatives from Western and other African countries, as well as to the courageous efforts of a number of Ethiopians, several unions have at last been established and have won some degree of recognition from the government.* Trade unions were first attempted among employees of the Franco-Ethiopian Railroad and in Eritrea.[42] They now include employees of a number of factories. Even household servants have formed associations that establish minimal conditions which members are obliged to demand from their employers.

Professional Associations.—The Ethiopian Teachers Association, with a large paper membership but scarcely any activity, was the only professional association in Ethiopia prior to the 1960 rebellion. If one may generalize from the frustrated attempts of Ethiopian doctors to establish a medical association, it would seem that the government was attempting to discourage groups of this sort as well as trade unions. Since 1961, however, the picture has changed. There now exists not only a medical association, which publishes its own

* A law establishing a legal basis for labor unions was enacted by the Ethiopian parliament in 1962.